

Spring Volunteers

*PERSIMMON GAP

Joan & Jack Lamkin-Visitor Center

Terry Purvis-Visitor Center

*RIO GRANDE VILLAGE

Barbara & Bill Baldwin-Campground Hosts

Nancy & Ed Bump (new)-Campground Hosts

Nancy Dickerson & Ken Fields-Backcountry

Sam & Erv Drabek-Backcountry

Denise & John Curd-Visitor Center

Lee & Joe Pytel-Visitor Center

*CASTOLON

Samantha Schroeder-Campground Host/
Backcountry

Steve Harper-Campground Host/Backcountry

Mark Kirtley-Visitor Center

Stan Amick (new)-Visitor Center

*BASIN

Kay & Doug Combs (new)-Campground Hosts

Susan & Gary Esser (new)-Campground Hosts

Dori & Tom Ramsay-Visitor Center

*PANTHER JUNCTION

Scarlett & Bob Wirt-Science/Resource Management

Bud Frankenberger-Science/Resource Management

Diane & Gary Frable-River

Don Janes-Interpretative

Victoria Summy (new)-Volunteer Assistant

Joseph Webb (new)-Science/Resource Management

Nancy Daniel-Science/Resource Management

Greg Levandoski-Science /Resource Management

*PART-TIME VOLUNTEERS

Judy Brinkerhoff-Science/Resource Management

John Davies-Visitor Protection

Meghan Hicks-Interpretation

Steve Wick-Archeology

Reine Wonite-Administration

VIP Awards Banquet

Over one hundred park staff and volunteers attended the Spring Volunteer Awards Banquet on March 25, 2005. The PJ Community Room looked especially festive with a Mexican décor to accompany the delicious buffet of enchiladas, fajitas, chalupas and more.

Executive Director of BBNHA, Mike Boren, extended a warm welcome to everyone and thanked them for coming to this special event. Words of appreciation to all the volunteers were given by Supt. John King.

Don Sharlow introduced the 19 Americorp volunteers and explained their contributions of lots of physical work the past two weeks to make improvement to park trails. Supt. John King pre-

sented a certificate and pins to each Americorp volunteer.

Next each supervisor introduced their volunteers, and related some of the highlights of the season.



These highlights (stories) evoked lots of laughter from everyone.



Each volunteer with over 300 hours received a gift certificate from BBNHA and other awards according to their total number of

hours of volunteering at Big Bend.

The time came to say good-bye and exchange addresses & email as some of the VIPs will be leaving soon while others will be staying for another month or more.

All the volunteers want to say THANK YOU to BBNHA for sponsoring the VIP Banquet and Casa Grande Club for providing drinks. Also, a special THANK YOU to Angelina Yost, VIP Coordinator, for making our volunteer experience at Big Bend both rewarding and memorable!



VIP BANQUET March, 2005



San Vincente Students Make Impact!

On March 18, the kindergarten through third grade students from San Vincente School took a field trip to Croton Springs. The purpose of the field trip was the planting of 39 Cottonwood trees the students had been



nur-

turing since October. Accompanying the students to Croton Springs was instructor Dr. Seawell, botanist Joe Sirotnak, VIP's Sharon Colloyer, Scarlett Wirt, Vicky Summy, and several parents.

How did this project start? The children made the suggestion to replenish the cottonwood trees after learning many of the cottonwoods had been cut down during the years miners and ranchers were in this area. In October, the trees were started from cuttings from Cottonwoods at Rio Grande Village. The students learned about different types of potting soils, caring for the trees, and collecting data on the growth of the trees.

After arriving at the Croton Springs, students & trees were unloaded from the bus. Botanist, Joe Sirotnak, talked to the students about planting the trees near the springs for a water source and the proper depth for the tree. Next, it was planting time and everyone began selecting their sites for the trees. After each



tree was planted, Joe marked the site with a GPS and collected the name of the students planting the tree. Students will be able to use the GPS sites to locate their tree in the future.

So, maybe someday you will want to take a hike to Croton Springs and view this oasis



*April 11 VIP Potluck

6:30 p.m.

PJ Community Room

Bring a dish that reflects your ethnicity, home state or personality! Remember your table service!

Speical drinks will be available.

Everyone welcome!!

*April 16 Quilt Show-Marathon

*April 22-23 Cancer Relay for Life

Contact Meghan Hicks at 477-2419

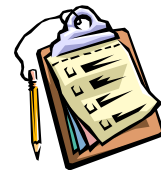
Special THANK YOU!!

As the VIPtoVIP editor and VIP Assistant, I want to thank Angleina, the volunteers and park staff for pictures, ideas, patience and other contributions to the VIP Program! You are all great! I'm looking forward to 2006 and working with all of you again.

Vicky Summy



Volunteer Notes



1. Have you worked at NPS Parks?

Vicky is updating all VIP hours and wants to include these hours in the data base. If you haven't been contacted & have hours, please call Vicky at 477-1195.

2. Submit your **Record of Hours Worked** report each month to Angelina or Vicky. Reports are due no later than the third of each month! Thank you.

3. Turn in your receipts and reimbursements to Angelina for her signature. It will take at least a week for your check to be processed. Check with Terry Boren, Administrative Officer, M-F, 8-5 to receive & sign your check.

4. If you are completing your volunteer time in April, please return uniforms, etc. to Vicky. Thank you!



Checking for proper water levels at RGV gambusia pond is VIP Greg Levandoski. As a wildlife biologist, Greg also collects data in the field on black bears and peregrine falcons.



Having time to "rest" during Spring Break doesn't happen often for VIP Doug Combs at the Basin Campground.

Locating rare plant species near Castolon is VIP Judy Brinkerhoff.



VIPs at Work!

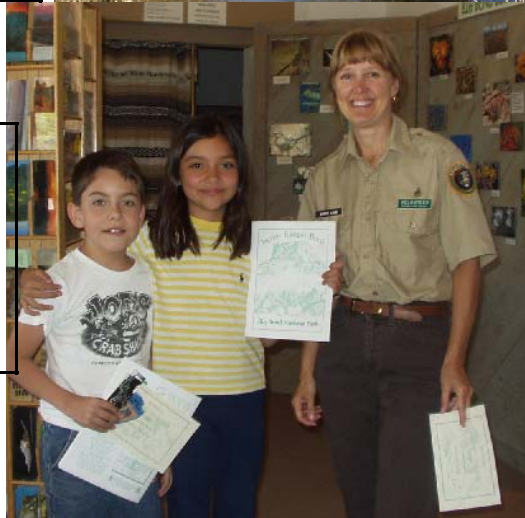


Backcountry VIP's are especially busy checking sites and even directing traffic! Pictured above are RGV VIP's Nancy Dickerson and Ken Fields and to the left, Castolon VIP Steve Harper

VIP Mark Kirtley shares his "Arroyo Adventure" Program at Croton Springs with visitors and VIP Samantha Schroeder.



Helping children with Junior Ranger activities are Panther Junction SCA Dorita Brady (left) and Rio Grande Village VIP Denise Curd (right).



Meet Volunteers

Joseph Webb & Victoria Summy

Many of you may have met Victoria and Joseph, who are new volunteers at Big Bend. You may have seen them walking around Panther Junction to their volunteer positions, hiking the trails or sitting outside their Air-stream trailer enjoying the view of the mountains. Originally from La Crosse, Wisconsin, they are prefer the warm winter weather in Texas to shoveling snow! In fact they like Texas so much that they recently purchased a home in Sun City, Georgetown, Texas!



Victoria and her husband, Joseph, are both "first-time" visitors and volunteers to Big Bend. However, they are not new to volunteering for the National Park Service. Previous to arriving at Big Bend, they volunteered this past fall at Joshua Tree National Park in California and this past summer at San Juan National Historic Park in Washington. Although they like their previous volunteer work in visitor centers and maintenance, they both say, "My volunteer position at Big Bend is the right place for me!"

Unlike many of the volunteer couples, Joseph and Victoria are volunteering in different divisions. This not only gives them the opportunity to learn about different aspects of the park but also makes the conversation at dinner livelier!

From Joseph....

My VIP position is to support Science and Resource Management as Wildlife Technician. The task is challenging, rewarding and offers much variety. I am involved in the feral hog study and management of this situation in the northern area of the Park. Another area of involvement is peregrine falcon monitoring and collecting data at historic aeries (rock ledges) in the Chisos and Santa Elena Canyon. Measuring water levels at Rio Grande Village and removal of invasive exotic plant species is yet another part of my position. Sighting and collecting data on desert mountain bighorn sheep is the final part of my position. However, I cannot report a sighting at this writing!



In my former profession, I practiced in a large medical complex in La Crosse, Wisconsin as a psychotherapist for 24 years. It came to me that the qualities that were most helpful in maintaining a successful practice were curiosity, patience, and attention to detail in my delivery of excellence in patient care. These simple qualities have carried over to my VIP opportunity here at Big Bend. My mentors and colleagues are the best! I am most grateful



to be serving in this special place.

My hobbies are reading, hiking, biking, birding, wood carving and tying flies for fly fishing.

From Victoria..

When I first read the posting of VIP Assistant on the Big Bend Website, I knew this was the volunteer position for me. I quickly applied for the position and hoped that Angelina would feel the same!

As the VIP Assistant, I keep records, take pictures, write the monthly newsletter, and assist in organizing events for the 40 full-



time volunteers, 6 part-time volunteers and many groups volunteering at Big Bend. One of my favorite things about my position is having the opportunity to visit with other volunteers and find out what they are doing at Big Bend. When talking to the other VIPs, I also learn more about the park and the different areas. Often the VIPs want to share their feelings about Big Bend with comments such as, "This is such a volunteer friendly park. The staff makes us feel so welcomed and valued. I'm glad I was selected to be a volunteer at Big Bend."

Before retiring in June of last year, I worked as an elementary school library media specialist for 32 years at schools in Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin. I always loved working with a variety of people--staff, students and parents, and my VIP position affords me that same opportunity.

My hobbies are biking, hiking, reading, quilting, knitting and learning about our national parks. One of my latest accomplishments was going to "RV Driving School" so I can be the relief driver when towing our trailer.

This summer Joseph and I will take some time to get settled in our new home. Our travel plans include going to Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota to visit children, grandchildren and friends. Our next volunteer opportunity will be in the fall at Yaquina Head Lighthouse (BLM) in Newport, Oregon. Joseph and I are looking forward to returning to Big Bend in January of 2006.



Take Pride in America Award Presented to 3 Big Bend VIPs

On behalf of Gayle Norton and the Department of Interior, Big Bend Supt. John King presented Mark Kirtley, Scarlett Wirt and Bob Wirt with the *Take Pride in America Presidential Award Certificates* at the Volunteer Awards Banquet on March 25, 2005. This award is presented to volunteers who have contributed over 4000 hours of volunteer service to the National Park Service Volunteer Program.

Mark Kirtley has been volunteering for 15 seasons at Big Bend with most of his time at the Persimmon Gap Visitor Center and most



recently at Castolon Visitor Centers. Thank you Mark for contributing over 4000 hours!

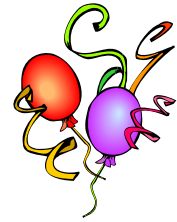
Scarlett and Bob Wirt have been volunteering at Big Bend for more than five years. Both the Wirts volunteer for the division of Science and Resource Management. Scarlett volunteers as the museum curator and Bob does surveying, mapping and human history



studies. They also have volunteered at the following National Parks: Rocky Mountain, Catocin Mountain, Prince William Forest, and Fort Frederica National Monument. Thank you Bob for contributing over 7000 hours and Scarlett for contributing over 4000 hours!

Happy Birthday!

Lee Pytel-March 29
Susie Douglas-April 11
Denise Curd-April 20

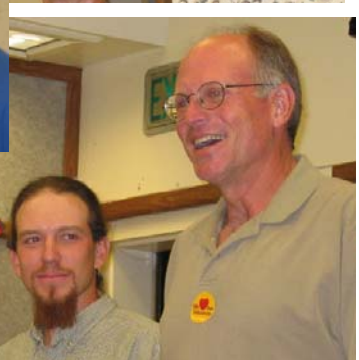
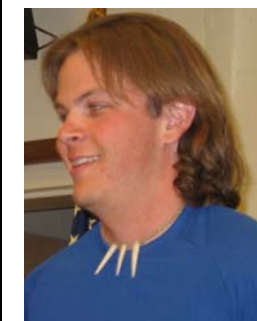


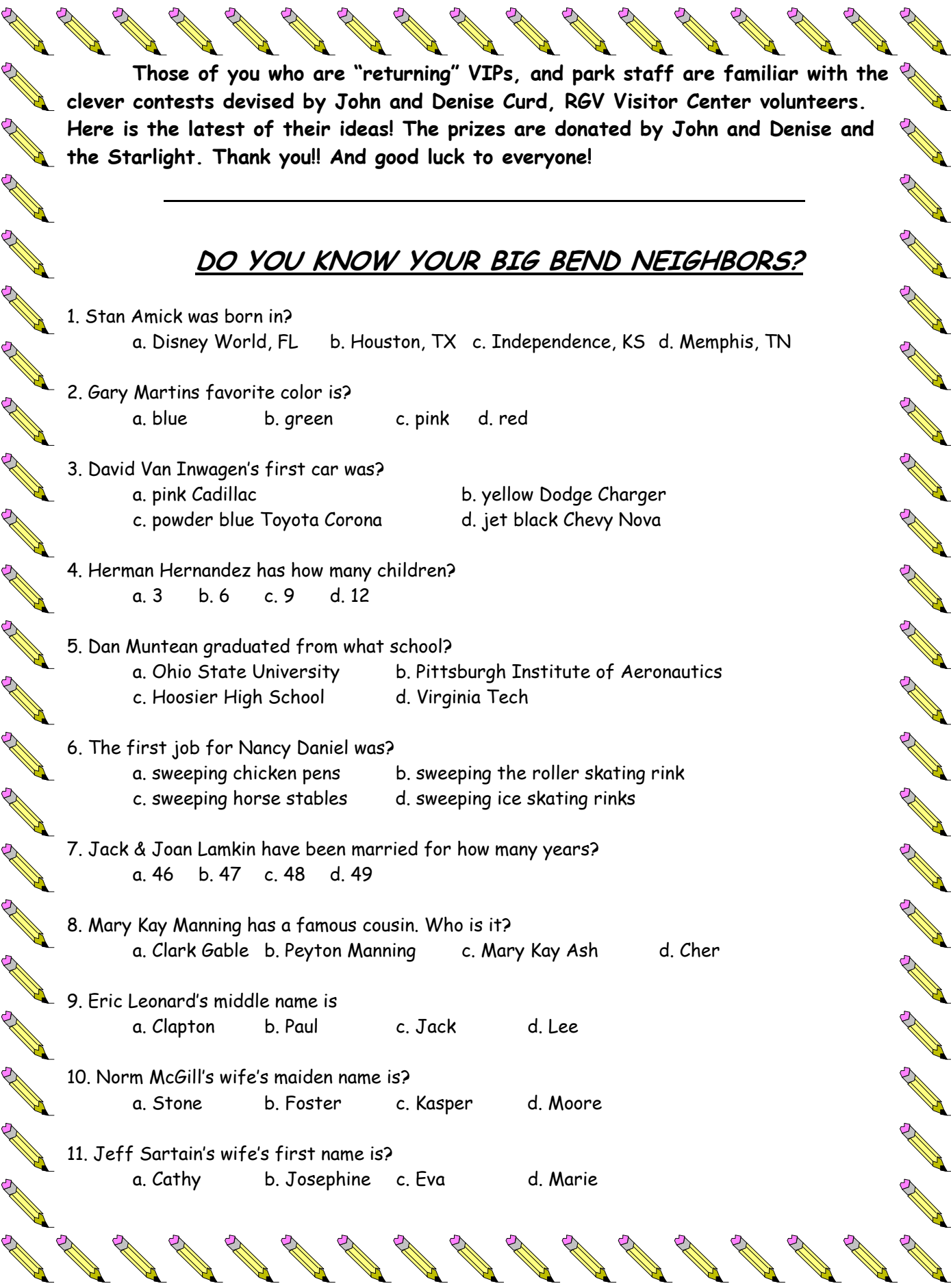
Happy Anniversary

Scarlett & Bob-March 10
Vicky & Joseph-April 4



Banquet Photos..
Continued

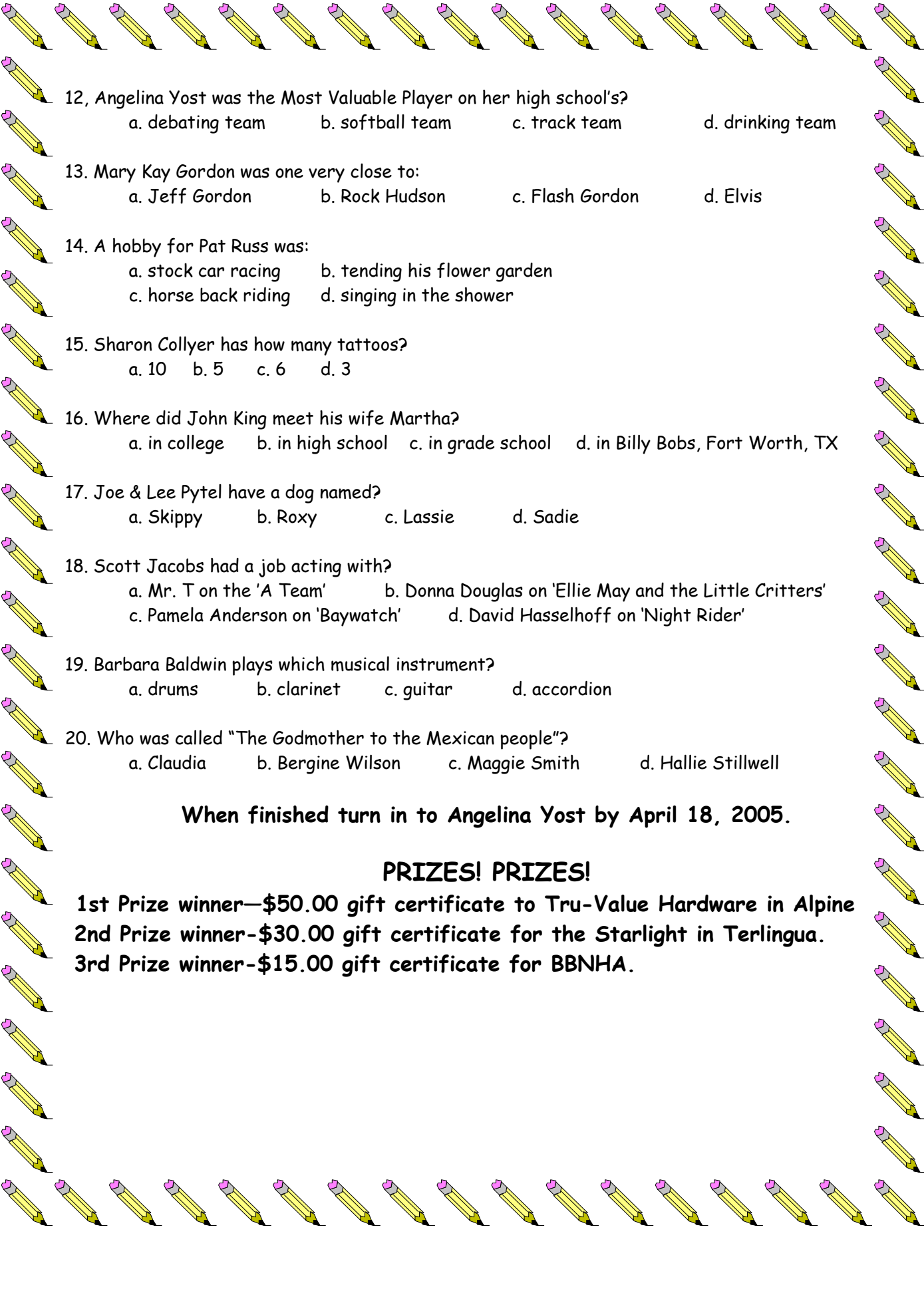




Those of you who are "returning" VIPs, and park staff are familiar with the clever contests devised by John and Denise Curd, RGV Visitor Center volunteers. Here is the latest of their ideas! The prizes are donated by John and Denise and the Starlight. Thank you!! And good luck to everyone!

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIG BEND NEIGHBORS?

1. Stan Amick was born in?
a. Disney World, FL b. Houston, TX c. Independence, KS d. Memphis, TN
2. Gary Martins favorite color is?
a. blue b. green c. pink d. red
3. David Van Inwagen's first car was?
a. pink Cadillac b. yellow Dodge Charger
c. powder blue Toyota Corona d. jet black Chevy Nova
4. Herman Hernandez has how many children?
a. 3 b. 6 c. 9 d. 12
5. Dan Muntean graduated from what school?
a. Ohio State University b. Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics
c. Hoosier High School d. Virginia Tech
6. The first job for Nancy Daniel was?
a. sweeping chicken pens b. sweeping the roller skating rink
c. sweeping horse stables d. sweeping ice skating rinks
7. Jack & Joan Lamkin have been married for how many years?
a. 46 b. 47 c. 48 d. 49
8. Mary Kay Manning has a famous cousin. Who is it?
a. Clark Gable b. Peyton Manning c. Mary Kay Ash d. Cher
9. Eric Leonard's middle name is
a. Clapton b. Paul c. Jack d. Lee
10. Norm McGill's wife's maiden name is?
a. Stone b. Foster c. Kasper d. Moore
11. Jeff Sartain's wife's first name is?
a. Cathy b. Josephine c. Eva d. Marie

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12. Angelina Yost was the Most Valuable Player on her high school's?
a. debating team b. softball team c. track team d. drinking team
13. Mary Kay Gordon was one very close to:
a. Jeff Gordon b. Rock Hudson c. Flash Gordon d. Elvis
14. A hobby for Pat Russ was:
a. stock car racing b. tending his flower garden
c. horse back riding d. singing in the shower
15. Sharon Collyer has how many tattoos?
a. 10 b. 5 c. 6 d. 3
16. Where did John King meet his wife Martha?
a. in college b. in high school c. in grade school d. in Billy Bobs, Fort Worth, TX
17. Joe & Lee Pytel have a dog named?
a. Skippy b. Roxy c. Lassie d. Sadie
18. Scott Jacobs had a job acting with?
a. Mr. T on the 'A Team' b. Donna Douglas on 'Ellie May and the Little Critters'
c. Pamela Anderson on 'Baywatch' d. David Hasselhoff on 'Night Rider'
19. Barbara Baldwin plays which musical instrument?
a. drums b. clarinet c. guitar d. accordion
20. Who was called "The Godmother to the Mexican people"?
a. Claudia b. Bergine Wilson c. Maggie Smith d. Hallie Stillwell

When finished turn in to Angelina Yost by April 18, 2005.

PRIZES! PRIZES!

1st Prize winner—\$50.00 gift certificate to Tru-Value Hardware in Alpine
2nd Prize winner—\$30.00 gift certificate for the Starlight in Terlingua.
3rd Prize winner—\$15.00 gift certificate for BBNHA.